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ART. XI. — *Historical and Statistical Information respecting the History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States; collected and prepared under the Direction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, per Act of Congress of March 3d, 1847.* By HENRY R. SCHOOLCRAFT, LL. D. Illustrated by S. EASTMAN, Capt. U. S. A. Published by Authority of Congress. Parts I., II., and III. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo, & Co. 1851–53. 3 vols. 4to. pp. 568, 608, & 635.

EACH of these volumes is thirteen inches long, eleven inches broad, nearly three inches thick, and weighs exactly ten pounds. An aggregate weight of thirty pounds of "Historical and Statistical Information" about the Indians is enough to daunt even a painstaking critic, who has scruples about the practice of reviewing books before reading them; but these volumes are as attractive in external appearance as they are ponderous. All the resources of the typographical art, of the paper-maker, the designer, and the engraver, have been lavished upon them. It is a luxury for the eye to rest upon the large expanse of their faultless pages, whose virgin whiteness is broken only by the firm impression of the well-cut types, every letter standing out with as much clearness and precision as if engraved in agate. And that the reader may not be sated by mere typographical wealth, the volumes are adorned with a profusion of engravings, all in the most finished style of art. Many of these are of the most costly kind of line engraving upon steel; some are richly colored lithographs, some are admirably executed woodcuts, and others still are specimens of some refinement in the art which we cannot more particularly describe. On the whole, the volumes are the most sumptuous that have yet appeared in our country, and their publication may fairly be said to form an era in the art of American bookmaking.

The volumes merit attention in another respect, besides their beauty and costliness. As there are no Lord Kingsboroughs in this country, willing to lavish a princely fortune upon the publication of a single magnificent work on Indian

antiquities, the enterprise was necessarily assumed by the government. Congress passed a law in 1847, appropriating the modest sum of \$5,000 to enable the Department of Indian Affairs, "under the direction of the Secretary of War, to collect and digest such statistics and materials as may illustrate the history, the present condition, and the future [?] prospects of the Indian tribes of the United States." Of course, this appropriation was soon found to be inadequate; \$10,000 were added to it by the act of September 30th, 1850, and five months afterwards, \$19,361 were given for the same purpose. In July, 1852, three other appropriations, amounting altogether to \$28,875, were made for this object; but as Congress was now apparently alarmed at the probable extent and cost of the publication, a proviso was added to the bill that "the work shall be completed in *five* volumes, and that at least one volume shall be published in each year" till the series shall be finished. If the labor is to be thus expedited, however, more money must be paid for it; and accordingly, on the 3d of March last, a bill was passed appropriating the additional sum of \$17,620.50 for carrying on this national enterprise. It appears, therefore, that the aggregate expense of the undertaking *thus far* has been \$80,856.50, or that each volume has cost somewhat over \$26,000. As two other volumes are yet to appear, the whole expense may be estimated at \$130,000.

The liberality with which this work has been supported appears the more extraordinary, when contrasted with some instances of government parsimony in enterprises of a similar character. When the Scientific Results of the Exploring Expedition were published, the wisdom of Congress limited the edition to *one hundred* copies. Considering the vast expense of the Expedition itself, and of the preparation of the scientific Reports and the drawings by which they were illustrated, a full corps of *savans* and artists having been engaged upon them for several years, this limitation of the number of copies was not merely ill-judged, but ludicrous; for the expense of type-setting and engraving being once incurred, the comparatively trifling charge for paper and presswork would have been the only cost of an edition of 1900 extra copies. Yet these Reports did not need the factitious value which is attached

to them by their rarity ; they are treasures not merely for the bibliomaniac, but for the scientific world, who have given them a high rank in the highest class to which such publications belong. And this is not the only instance of the ill-timed economy of Congress in respect to the few scientific works of merit and interest, the publication of which has devolved upon the government. The invaluable reports of the explorations of Nicolet and Fremont, the geological surveys of Foster and Whitney, and the annual reports of the distinguished head of the Coast Survey, appear in dingy pamphlets the typography of which would be a disgrace to a penny newspaper. What lucky accident or skilful management has rescued Mr. Schoolcraft's Indian researches from a similar fate, we cannot tell. Those who are conversant with the manner in which the annual appropriation bills are framed, and with the influences under which they are passed by both Houses of Congress, might probably solve the mystery, if they saw fit. But we seek not to enter into their secret. These costly volumes, we repeat, have a national character. They are not merely published under government patronage ; they form a government work, devoted to a great national object. Commenced at the instigation of the Department of Indian Affairs, carried on under the direction of the Secretary of War, supported by frequent and large appropriations of the public money, and finally published in the most sumptuous style "by authority of Congress," the government is fairly held responsible for them. They will be examined both abroad and at home with interest and attention.

The first volume is devoted chiefly, but not exclusively, to Indian antiquities and the few traces which remain of the history of the aborigines before the whites landed upon this continent. It contains little or nothing that is new, as a collection even of materials previously well known it is very incomplete, and not even an attempt is made to systematize the information, or to deduce from it any general conclusions or theories which may throw light upon the ancient history of the Indian race, or the revolutions which it may have undergone. The only object of the author or editor appears to have been, to bring together matter enough to fill a large vo-

lume, no matter whether it bore an immediate or remote relation to the principal subject, or whether the parts bore any relation whatever to each other. Thus, the history of the exploration of the Mississippi River was sufficiently well known, and the exploration itself was long ago completed. The last step in it was taken by Mr. Schoolcraft himself, in 1832, when, in an expedition under government auspices, he traced the source of the river to Itasca lake, and published a detailed account of his journey in an illustrated volume, two years afterwards. We see no reason for treating the reader with the *crambe decies repetita* of this successful journey, which was neither a difficult nor eventful one, or for prefacing it with a long account of the other explorers of the same stream, from De Soto downwards, or, still less, for intruding the matter into the midst of a volume on Indian antiquities. Quite as little can be said for the intrusion of the meagre and valueless essay, which follows, on the Gold Deposits of California. It contains a very bald account of the discovery which has proved so fruitful and important, of the imperfect mineralogical examination of the specimens first sent to the War Office, of ancient gold mines and those found in South America, and a good deal of loose speculation about the extent and character of the deposits, and the probability of finding other veins of the metal in the more elevated rocks. Not a fact is given which had not been made known in the newspapers long before the publication of this first volume in 1851. Of the whole essay, chapter, or section — whichever the author may please to call it — we may well say,

“The thing itself is neither rich nor rare;”

and when we find it interpolated into a huge volume about the native tribes of North America, we have no feeling

“But wonder how the devil it got there.”

Next, in the order or disorder of Mr. Schoolcraft's first volume, is a section purporting to be “Mineralogical and Geographical Notices, denoting the value of aboriginal territory”; — a magnificent title for a small collection of scraps, which appear to have been cut out of the newspapers, about tin on the Kansas river, lead ores in Wisconsin and Iowa, native

silver in Michigan, a recent unsuccessful attempt to obtain salt by deep boring in Onondaga county, and the geography of the Genesee country, in western New York. The astonished reader may well ask, What has all this to do with the North American Indians? And this inquiry seems still more pertinent, when, after skipping ten or a dozen pages, he finds the next chapter or section to relate to the "Existing Geological Action of the North American Lakes." If there were any novelty or value in the facts here communicated, we might pardon the intrusion of them into the discussion of a theme with which they have no conceivable relation or union. But the passage contains nothing which was not familiarly known to every careless voyager over our Great Lakes, who has had curiosity enough to observe the configuration of the shores along which he sailed. The oft repeated and still oftener described phenomena of ancient disruption and upheaval, of abrasion and drift, which the well-trained geologist now hardly stops to notice, are here enumerated as if the only object were to fill out a paragraph, and are sometimes described with wearisome minuteness. Of the value of the general remarks suggested by these desultory notices of very common geological phenomena, the following may serve as a specimen.

"7. CONTINENTAL ABRASION. If we are to regard the Lakes as a grand geological triturating apparatus, converting its loose and shore rocks into a pulverulent state, it may be anticipated that their action on the configuration of the shores will be very considerable in the course of long periods. What is lost in this process in one place, from their rock area, is found to augment the quantity of alluvial soil in another; which, in time, renders the whole area suitable for agriculture. Thus the plough gradually, but surely, follows the tempest and the hurricane; *while the absolute indestructibility of matter is man's guarantee under every change.*

"8. INTEGRITY OF MATTER. The absolute quantity and cubical area of *material matter* (!) of these immense areas is still the same. The elements of which they are composed are seen to be indestructible. No change of combination or position is seen to take from, or add to, the material aggregate. If *physical matter* (!) under the force of tempests, could be destroyed, as well as change its forms, there would result an annihilation of a part or molecule of the original accretion of elements. Wild as their rage sometimes is, casting vessels

on high on these Lakes, the entire volume of them yet retains its integrity."

We shall not dispute either the geology or the philosophy of this passage. Of course, if "material matter" or "physical matter," to adopt our author's happy phrases, "could be destroyed," there can be no doubt that "an annihilation of a part or molecule would result." But what has all this to do with the "History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes"? The few feeble remnants of them that still linger about the shores of the Great Lakes will not probably continue long enough to witness the final conversion of the Pictured Rocks of Lake Superior into smiling cornfields.

As Mr. Schoolcraft came down to our own day to speak of the present action of the waters of the Lakes, he makes amends in the next section, by taking a great leap backwards to what he calls "the antique osteology of the Monster Period." We know not which of the geological ages are here referred to, as they are all of "monster" length, and most of the animals which lived in them would appear monstrous if exhibited in a modern menagerie. But no matter; palæontology is an interesting study, and we were prepared to welcome any new contributions to it, even if foisted into a treatise where they do not belong. Whatever may have been thought of the promise of a chapter with such a title, however, it was barren of fulfilment; for it proved on examination to contain nothing but a letter from a correspondent, giving a meagre account of one of those curious "salt licks" in the western States, which seem in a former geological period to have operated as *mastodon traps*, these huge animals frequenting them in quest of salt, and venturing too far into the treacherous morass, becoming inextricably entangled, and perishing ignobly in the mire. Only one complete specimen appears to have been disinterred; and as our author speaks of visiting it after it was set up for exhibition in Piccadilly, London, we may presume that its history and character were pretty well known, before these big volumes, which look like mastodons among our books, were written. But again we ask, how does this concern the Indians?

Our readers must not imagine, however, that these volumes

are like a representation of Hamlet, with the part of the philosophic Prince of Denmark himself entirely left out. Unquestionably a good deal is said about the Indians in them, though very little is said to the purpose. The next section or chapter bears as its title "an Aboriginal Palladium, as exhibited in the Oneida Stone." The Oneida Indians, it seems, were wont to meet in council, on the top of a hill in their territory, around a huge boulder rock, "irregularly orbicular" in shape, which they naturally enough adopted as the symbol of their tribe, and from its name, *Oneota*, came their usual appellation. According to the confused account here given, this word signifies, in the Indian tongue, "the People of the Stone, or, by a metaphor, the People who sprang from the Stone;" though this etymology seems to conflict with the story that the word was originally the proper name of the stone itself, and not of the people who were named after it. Of course, we are treated to a full account and a fine colored engraving of this "aboriginal palladium," from neither of which can we discern that it differed much from other boulders, which are found in great abundance in the neighborhood. Our author made a journey in 1845, with Indian guides, expressly to examine it, and found that its surface was somewhat *rougher* than is common with boulders that have been drifted so far; and this "peculiarity," he sagaciously conjectures, "*may perhaps be* the result of ancient fires kindled against its sides." He also made the interesting discovery, "on closely inspecting this stone," that "minute species of mosses are found to occupy asperities in its surface." We are not told that other boulders on the neighboring hills present similar phenomena; but we may safely believe that they do. It is also said to be "one of the *peculiar features* of this hill of the Oneida or Oneota stone, that its apex shelters from the north-east winds—the worst winds of our continent—a fertile transverse valley." This is certainly rather extraordinary; for it can hardly be said to be "a peculiar feature" of any hill with which we happen to be acquainted, that its apex shelters from the north-east wind some lowland tract in its neighborhood.

An article on the new Territory of Minnesota contains

hardly a word about the few savages who still inhabit it, but gives an imperfect geological and geographical sketch of the country, in which we do not find a single fact of novelty and interest. It is such an article as might be lazily penned, as a contribution to a newspaper, by one who had paid a two days' visit to the region described. It seems to have been introduced for no other purpose than that of bringing in a few other desultory observations made by Mr. Schoolcraft, over twenty years ago, in the course of his memorable journey to Itasca Lake.

The famed inscription on Dighton rock, the discovery of what was pompously but incorrectly termed a "Skeleton in Armor" near Fall River in Massachusetts, and the more recent discovery of a few other Indian skeletons, with some copper implements near them, in the same locality, have already been so thoroughly discussed that we did not expect Mr. Schoolcraft to tell us any thing new about them; and this expectation has not been disappointed. Elaborate notices are given of them, however, and the author comes to what we consider the right conclusion, "that the skeletons at Fall River were those of Indians who may possibly have lived during the time of Philip's wars, or a few years earlier, but that they are only those of Indians." This conclusion is founded upon the very satisfactory reasons, that "the state of preservation of the flesh and bones proves that they could not have been of very ancient date," that the crania show "the conical formation of the skull peculiar to the Indian," "and lastly, the use of copper for arrow heads among the Indians at the arrival of the Puritans is well authenticated." The pieces found were "apparently mere sheet copper, rudely cut into simple forms," and were quite unfit for defensive armor. The author does not mend his argument much, however, when he adds the important information that "both Rome and Phœnicia were well acquainted with the elaborate working of iron and brass."

A detailed account is given of a visit made to Dighton rock, in 1847, by Mr. Schoolcraft, as one of a committee, appointed by the New York Historical Society, to examine the inscription. But the account adds nothing to our previous

information upon the subject, if we except the important facts that the author rode from Fall River to Dighton Four Corners, a distance of ten miles, "in an open one-horse buggy, which afforded a pleasant view of the state of New England cultivation and thrift on a rather indifferent soil;" and that he "crossed the river to the rock in a skiff rowed by an interesting lad, called Whitmarsh, who was not the less so for a lisp." This boy had shown some acuteness and a disposition to facilitate the observations to be made by the visitors, by crossing the river at an earlier hour in the morning, and marking in chalk the outlines of the principal figures in the inscription, so that they stood out very conspicuously when Mr. Schoolcraft approached. A fresh copy of the inscription is here furnished in an engraving founded in part upon the copies previously taken, and in part upon our author's own observations. An inspection of it makes the interpretation given by the Copenhagen antiquaries appear more doubtful than ever. That part of the inscription upon which they chiefly relied—a very small portion of the whole—is here presented with some material variations. Yet our author adheres to the very improbable hypothesis, that there are "two diverse and wholly distinct characters employed, namely, an Algonquin and an Icelandic inscription." That portion which is admitted to be pictographic and Indian in its origin is so rudely done and faintly incised, presenting awkward scrawls, any one of which, like Polonius's cloud, may be easily held to be a camel, a weasel, or "very like a whale," the action of the atmosphere and the tide water having also effaced in a great degree what little *vraisemblance* it may have once possessed, that detached portions of it may now seem meaningless—or alphabetic, which amounts to the same thing; and these portions may naturally seem Runic to an imaginative northern antiquary, or Sanscrit to an Oriental one. A little group, in the lower central part of the inscription, of these unmeaning and half-effaced scrawls, which can be construed, at most, into half a dozen alphabetic characters, is a very narrow basis to erect a theory upon. The present age has seen marvels accomplished in the art of deciphering; witness the labors of Mr. Layard, Col. Rawlinson, and Dr.

Hinckes at Nineveh and Behistun. But really the laborers upon the Dighton rock ought to remember that an inscription cannot be deciphered, even by the greatest learning and skill, if it be not certain that an alphabetic inscription exists.

Mr. Schoolcraft has unwittingly furnished evidence, in this very work, that his hypothesis of the alphabetic character of a part of the Dighton inscription is untenable. He has furnished engraved copies of several other rude inscriptions upon rock, unquestionably of Indian origin, which have been found at different places in the interior of the country. These are certainly pictographic, being such rude outlines of familiar objects as a child three years old will scrawl upon a slate. One of them, quite perfectly preserved, has been recently discovered upon a rock on the south side of Cunningham's Island, Lake Erie. It is larger and more distinct than the Dighton inscription, for most of the objects which it was intended to delineate can be clearly made out; but is not a whit more artistic. Mr. Schoolcraft justly gives it a recent date, as he thinks that figures intended to represent Europeans can be detected in it. Had it been exposed a century longer to atmospheric influences, and also to abrasion and accretion from the ebb and flow of a tide, the indistinct remains of it would have formed a very faithful counterpart to the Dighton inscription. As it is, our author rightly observes that "its leading symbols are readily interpreted." But the following account of them is rather magniloquent and imaginative. "The human figures, pipes, smoking groups, the presents and other figures, denote bribes, negotiations, *crimes, turmoils, which tell a story of thrilling interest, in which the whiteman or European plays a part.*" Another of these rude scrawls on rock is copied in an elaborate engraving from a spot near Esopus Landing, on Hudson River. It is unquestionably Indian, and must have been made at a time subsequent to the landing of the whites. It represents a single human figure, wearing two feathers, and holding a gun. A white, though a schoolboy, would not have had patience enough to carve such a figure in so stubborn a material.

When Mr. Schoolcraft was at Mackinaw, he showed an engraved copy of the Dighton inscription to an Indian of that

neighborhood whom he had observed to have a taste for drawing signs and figures, and who was reputed to be an expert in interpreting Indian pictography, and requested him to decipher it to the best of his ability. The savage readily complied, and furnished an interpretation which we must consider as far more probable than that of the Copenhagen antiquaries. Taking it piecemeal, he explained each portion either as a rude semblance or arbitrary symbol of some object or event familiar to the red men. He made no attempt to connect these together as parts of one legend, though he affected to consider the whole as the memorial of a contest between two hostile tribes. Among the objects or figures which he identified were those of a pipe, a dart, a chief and his sister, a sweating lodge, a war-club, symbols of the sun and moon, and many others. We commend this interpretation, made by the Algonquin priest, Chingwauk, to the serious attention of all learned European antiquaries, who are prone to find Runic inscriptions in the rude scrawls of savages, and to add a new chapter to the history of the world upon the strength of them.

Children and savages are equally fond of gaudy pictures. It is this taste, in its lowest stage, which leads the latter to paint their bodies and faces so hideously when they go out to war, or upon any other grand occasion. Advanced one step farther in the cultivation of the art, if art it can be called, they draw rude outlines of familiar objects, sometimes on the rock, as in the cases we have just examined, and sometimes on skins, the bark of trees, or the trees themselves; and these they smear with the same bright pigments which they use to *disfigure* their faces. At times, when a particular animal is taken as the symbol or *totem* of a tribe, these representations come to have a symbolic character. In a similar manner, a *hatchet* comes to signify *war*, and the *calumet* is the token of *peace*. With a few of the tribe, especially with the priests, these figures may be applied, to a small extent, to mnemonic uses, or, when used for the purposes of a message, may darkly indicate a menace which the sender is unwilling to pronounce distinctly. But savages who have made so little progress as our North American Indians stop here, and sel-

dom accomplish even as much as this in their attempts to communicate ideas by other means than speech. Mr. Schoolcraft grossly exaggerates when he claims for "the art" the term of picture-writing; and we think only of "the art" of book-making when we find over a hundred pages, and about a score of colored engravings, devoted to a detailed exposition and discussion of this profitless theme. Sheet after sheet, covered with sprawling outlines of man, bird, and beast, smeared with bright yellow or dirty red, add nothing to our knowledge of Indian character or Indian history. Engraved copies of Egyptian hieroglyphics and specimens of Mexican picture-writing, introduced ostensibly for comparison, do not enrich or dignify the barren subject; this whole series of plates, and the letter-press with which they are accompanied, might afford amusement to infants, but certainly could impart no instruction to a child five years old.

Indeed, we are compelled to believe that one of the principal objects in getting up the work was to afford a profitable job to the engravers. There are seventy-six plates in the first volume, and most of them are of such common objects as arrow-heads, axes, tomahawks, beads, amulets, spear-heads, gorgets, pipes, and other articles of Indian manufacture, all of which can be found in the national collection at Washington, and in almost every museum in the country. The same purpose, to patronize the engraver, is still more glaringly exhibited in the second and third volumes. In all seriousness, we ask, what useful end is answered by multiplying costly line engravings of such fanciful scenes as those of the landing of the Whites in Virginia in 1584, the Interview of Hendrick Hudson with the Indians in 1609, the Interview of Massasoit with the Pilgrims in 1620, the Defeat of Vasquez D'Ayllon by the Chicoreans in 1518, and De Soto with his party at Tampa Bay, Florida, in 1539? If the object had been to illustrate an annual or gift-book, such engravings might seem appropriate, especially if accompanied by some indifferent stanzas in further commemoration of the scene represented in them. But here they have no historic or antiquarian significance or verity. It will not be contended, we suppose, that the costumes either of the Indians or European actors in these

ancient scenes, or any of the circumstances attending them, are here depicted with historic accuracy. They are just as fanciful as Raphael's painting of St. Cecilia singing so divinely, that the heavens above her open and display a choir of seraphs, duly equipped with fiddles and psalm-books, who sing and play an accompaniment. Equally impertinent for the ostensible objects of this work are the engraved views of the Valley of the St. Peters, the Ruins of Old Fort Mackinac, Esopus Landing on the Hudson River, Pittsburg as it appeared in 1790, and Humboldt Landing, California.

As to the relations preserved between the author and the engravers, we are compelled to believe, in most of the cases, that the text was written in order to illustrate the plates, instead of the plates being designed to elucidate the writer's meaning. Some account has already been given of the manner in which heterogeneous topics are huddled together in the first volume. But the method therein pursued seems order itself when compared with the "confusion worse confounded" of the Second and Third Parts. The want of system is the more conspicuous, as Mr. Schoolcraft seems to have a clear idea of the benefits of a scientific arrangement, and prints, at the commencement of the volumes, a list of the generic divisions of the subject, to which the subsequent matter is to be referred. But the arrangement seems to be made only for the purpose of being departed from. The whole work forms only a huge repertory, in which are jumbled together all the materials that the editor can lay his hands upon,—letters from correspondents, abstracts of old books, vocabularies, statistics, independent essays on general subjects, any matter to illustrate a fine engraving, etc. A reference, near or remote, to the North American Indians is generally perceptible, but not always. Here, for instance, is an essay three pages long, by the editor himself, on the "Importance of the Pastoral State on Races of Men;" and it is followed by one, four pages in length, from the pen of John Johnston, Esq., on the "Means of Melioration." Some notices of the natural caves in the Sioux country, taken from the posthumous papers of Mr. Nicolet, precede a diary kept by Lieut. Whipple while surveying the southern boundary line of California. What distinct

information respecting the "History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes" can be gathered from so miscellaneous a selection, or collection, of papers as this, we leave our readers to imagine.

As Mr. Schoolcraft has passed a large portion of his life among the aborigines of this continent, with whom he has also connected himself by marriage, we were led to hope that he might at least have gathered from them some interesting traditions of their former state and the vicissitudes through which they have passed, and some distinct knowledge of their religious belief and modes of worship. But even this hope was disappointed, the information given upon these points being meagre and fragmentary to the last degree. The few legends and mythical stories that are narrated, seem to have received so much factitious embellishment in the translation, that they throw little light upon the history or the intellectual habits of those among whom they originated. But our readers shall judge for themselves, as the following is one of the best that is reported. It is entitled "Mondamin, or the Origin of the Zea Maize, a Chippewa Allegory," and purports to have been gathered from the oral traditions of this tribe during the author's residence among them at the Sault Ste. Marie.

"A poor Indian was living with his wife and children in a beautiful part of the country. His children were too young to give him any assistance in hunting; and he had but ill luck himself. But he was thankful for all he received from the forest, and although he was very poor, he was very contented.

"His elder son inherited the same disposition, and had ever been obedient to his parents. He had now reached the age at which it is proper to make the initial fast, which the Indian lads all do at about fourteen or fifteen. As soon as the spring arrived, his mother built him a little fasting-lodge in a retired spot, where he would not be disturbed; and when it was finished, he went in and began his fast. He amused himself for a few mornings by rambling about in the vicinity, looking at the shrubs and wild-flowers, (for he had a taste for such things,) and brought great bunches of them along in his hands, which led him often to think on the goodness of the Great Spirit in providing all kinds of fruits and herbs for the use of man. This idea quite took possession of his mind, and he earnestly prayed that he might dream of something to benefit his people; for he had often seen them suffering for the want of food.

“On the third day he became too weak and faint to walk about, and kept his bed. He fancied, while thus lying in a dreamy state, that he saw a handsome young man, drest in green robes, and with green plumes on his head, advancing towards him. The visitor said: ‘I am sent to you, my friend, by the Great Spirit, who made all things. He has observed you. He sees that you desire to procure a benefit to your people. Listen to my words, and follow my instructions.’ He then told the young man to rise and wrestle with him. Weak as he was, he tottered to his feet and began, but after a long trial, the handsome stranger said, ‘My friend, it is enough for once; I will come again.’ He then vanished.

“On the next day the celestial visitor reappeared, and renewed the trial. The young man knew that his physical strength was even less than the day before; but as this declined, he felt that his mind became stronger and clearer. Perceiving this, the stranger in plumes again spoke to him. ‘To-morrow,’ he said, ‘will be your last trial. Be strong and courageous; it is the only way in which you can obtain the boon you seek.’ He then departed.

“On the third day, as the young faster lay on his pallet weak and exhausted, the pleasing visitor returned; and as he renewed the contest, he looked more beautiful than ever. The young man grasped him, and seemed to feel new strength imparted to his body, while that of his antagonist grew weaker.

“At length the stranger cried out, ‘It is enough, — I am beaten. You will win your desire from the Great Spirit. To-morrow will be the seventh day of your fast, and the last of your trials. Your father will bring you food, which will recruit you. I shall then visit you for the last time, and I foresee that you are destined to prevail. As soon as you have thrown me down, strip off my garments, and bury me on the spot. Visit the place, and keep the earth clean and soft. Let no weeds grow there. I shall soon come to life, and reappear with all the wrappings of my garments and my waving plumes. Once a month cover my roots with fresh earth; and by following these directions your triumph will be complete.’ He then disappeared.

Next morning the youth’s father came with food, but he asked him to set it by, for a particular reason, till the sun went down. Meantime the sky-visitor came for his final trial, and although the young man had not partaken of his father’s offer of food, he engaged in the combat with his visitor with a feeling of supernatural strength. He threw him down. He then stripped off his garments and plumes. He buried his body in the earth, carefully preparing the ground, and removing every weed; and then returned to his father’s lodge. He

kept every thing to himself, revealing nothing to denote his vision or trials. He partook sparingly of food, and soon recovered his perfect strength. But he never for a moment forgot the burial-place of his friend. He carefully visited it, and would not let even a wild-flower grow there. Soon he saw the tops of the green plumes coming out of the ground, at first in spiral points, then expanding into broad leaves, and rising in green stalks; and finally assuming their silken fringes and yellow tassels.

"The spring and summer had now passed; when one day, towards evening, he requested his father to visit the lonely spot where he had fasted. The old man stood in amazement. The lodge was gone, and in its place stood a tall, graceful, and majestic plant, waving its taper leaves, and displaying its bright-colored plumes and tassels. But what most attracted his admiration was its cluster of golden ears. 'It is the friend of my dreams and visions,' said the youth. 'It is *Mon-damin*, it is the spirit's grain,' said the father. And this is the origin of the Indian corn." Part ii. pp. 230 - 232.

Various statistical returns occupy a portion of each of these volumes. We turned to these with some curiosity, hoping that they might contain definite and precise information, specially collected for the purposes of the work, on which interesting conclusions might be founded, or which might serve at any rate as specific facts for record in the history of the red race. But again we were wholly disappointed. A plan seems to have been drawn out, of great pretensions and even absurd minuteness, for taking a census of all the Indian tribes within the limits of the United States, together with their "Vital and Industrial Statistics." But the courage and patience of the investigator seem to have failed him, after completing the easiest, and smallest portion of his task, — the census of the feeble remnant of the Iroquois confederacy, amounting in all to less than 6000 souls, most of whom still reside within the limits of New York and Pennsylvania. A few particulars are also given respecting some members of the Algonquin Group. But the skeleton of the plan is printed at great length, even for those tribes or bands, and in those particulars, in respect to which no information has been obtained. Thus we have page after page of blank columns, or of statistical returns in which the statistics are omitted. For what purpose these were inserted in the volume, if not to give "a fat job" to the printer

or compositor, we cannot imagine. We find, for instance, 176 different columns, or specific heads of inquiry, arrayed against each member of the Algonquin Group; and in reference to twenty-seven such members, just *five* of these columns are filled up, and 171 are left blank. To obtain space for arraying these blank columns in proper order, the names of the twenty-seven Algonquin tribes or bands are printed ten times over, on as many distinct pages. Thus we have one third of a page of actual statistics, and nine pages and two thirds of blanks. Perhaps these numbers indicate very fairly the ratio between the information promised, and the information actually supplied, by these three ponderous quartos. The second and third volumes of the work do not indicate that any progress has been made in completing this magnificent plan of a Census of the Indians; the statistical portion of them consists mainly of a reprint of some forgotten papers, fished up in great part from old Congressional documents, containing estimates or very imperfect enumerations of the Indian Tribes at different epochs.

But we need not carry the examination of these bulky and pretentious volumes any farther; the reader can now form a fair judgment of their character and merits. We have spoken very plainly about them, but not from any feeling of unkindness towards their author or editor, who has gained some reputation for his extensive acquaintance with Indian affairs, and some credit for his former publications. If Mr. Schoolcraft alone had been responsible for the work, and had defrayed its expenses from his own resources, we should have allowed him and his publisher to obtain wisdom by experience; it would have been quite superfluous to caution the public against purchasing the book. Even if this had been an ordinary case of the abuse of government patronage, we should not have meddled with it; as it is no business of ours to look after the peccadilloes of politicians or the speculations of public contractors. But this is a work of lofty pretensions upon a matter of great interest to men of science. If allowed to go forth to the world unchallenged, it will be the means of casting a reproach upon American science, or of impeaching the faithfulness or the fearlessness of those who are set to guard

its interests. Those who are engaged in the study of ethnography, and its kindred sciences, whether at home or abroad, will seek with eagerness to consult a work upon such a subject, got up by the authority of Congress, and published in a style of great magnificence, at the expense of the American government; but after a brief examination, they will probably close the volume, as we have done, with a feeling of impatience and disgust. On this point, we have something more than conjecture to offer. We have the highest authority for stating that Baron Humboldt, having had occasion to examine the work, expressed in strong terms his opinion that it was a crude and worthless compilation, and his great surprise that it should be allowed to appear with the sanction and at the expense of the government of the United States. The aid which Congress can offer to scientific and literary enterprises of a national character ought at once to be liberal, and to be watched with jealous care. If the work really deserves patronage, and is at the same time national in its objects, hardly any appropriation for its encouragement can be deemed excessive. Every government of a civilized people acknowledges its obligations to do something for the advancement of science and the diffusion of knowledge, something for arts, letters, and education. Truly scientific reports of surveys that have been executed for government purposes ought to be published in a liberal style, and to be widely and gratuitously distributed. The people will gladly welcome the information that is thus placed before them, and will not grudge the trifling burden to the national treasury. But in order that this source of patronage for science and letters may not be wholly dried up, its treasures should not be drawn off without a careful scrutiny of the character of the work to which they are to be devoted. The appropriation of nearly thirty thousand dollars a volume for the ill-digested and valueless compilation that lies before us, rich though it be in its exterior and costly in its illustrations, is enough to discredit the whole system of publishing works at the government expense. We have done our share in exposing the nature of the evil; it is for Congress to do the rest.